

A
Funeral Serimon

PREACHED

Upon the Death of the Reverend and
GODLY DIVINE,

Mr. FRANCIS HOLCROFT,

Late Pastor of a

Congregational Church

IN

Cambridgeshire.

Who Deceased Jan. 6. 1693, Aged 63.

• By T. M. Preacher of the Gospel.

LONDON, Printed for *William Marshall*, and Sold
at the *Bible* in *Newgate-Street*. 1693.

Where are to be had *Mr. Holcroft's Elegy*.

An Epistle to the Christian Readers.

THIS Province of Preaching at the Funerals of our much Reverend Brother Mr. Francis Holcroft Deceased, was by Divine Lot devolved upon our Worthy Brother Mr. Milway, Pastor of a Church of Christ in Bury in Suffolk: Who (notwithstanding the rude insolency of the absurd Scholars disturbing the whole Assembly at that time, and therein highly affronting the present Generous Government) was much assisted by the Lord, and performed it (by his Grace) with great Majestick boldness and gravity, to their confusion of face, and our expected satisfaction: The Sermon now Printed, we recommend to you as very nervous, and much adapted to the occasion; it was to us in the hearing of it as a very lovely Song of one that had a pleasant voice, and could play well on an Instrument: What was said in praise of the Person, was but a just debt, and the payment was rather under than over. Read the Sermon, and may it be as sweet and profitable to you in reading, as to us in hearing. One of our Prophets, and that none of the Minor Prophets, but to us a great one in Israel, is dead, as to his Body, yet lives in his spirit in Glory. May his words of Doctrine, Counsel, Conduct, Comfort, which already have taken hold on the hearts of many in Cambridgeshire, and many other places, abide and produce much fruit. Knowing assuredly, that his words of threatening which he denounced, will overtake the scorers that ridiculed the Saints at his Funerals, contradicting and blaspheming: And like as the Lord thought to do unto them according to their ways and doings, so will he deal with them, if they do not bear and hearken to the Lord, and turn from their evil ways and doings. May the Prophets that survive, attain in their Ministry to the height of this excellent person, who as to Gifts, as Saul for stature among his Brethren, galler by the head and shoulders was, and to us in our day one of David's Chieftains and mighty Warriors by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; doing great and good execution. We question not but great is his reward in Heaven, yet a reward of Graces he fits now (and will fit both in Soul and Body) in a high place in Glory. This Teacher shall

Ezek. 33. 32.

Zech. 1. 4. 6.

1 Sam. 10. 23.

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Dan. 12. 3: *shines as the Stars, and as the brightness of the Firmament, having turned many not only from sin, but unto righteousness (i. e.) justified them, by turning them to the imputed righteousness of Christ; a Doctrine much despised by many of the Prophets of our Age. In fine, it pleased the Lord, that after this our small Apostle had in the body been frequently wrapt up into Heaven in our view in Prayer and Preaching, or rather Heaven descending into him, and upon him, in high communion and enjoyments of God, in which he had such Illuminations, that he was not able to utter and express; It pleased God, lest he should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of these discoveries, that a messenger of Satan should be sent to buffet him; and though the Lord was besought abundantly by himself, and many others; yet would not the Lord cause it wholly to depart: He gives not account of any of his matters, he is Sovereign Lord of all; is in one mind, who can turn him; doth whatever he will in Heaven and Earth, and laughs at the trial of the innocent. Yet before his death, and in his dying, the Grace of God was sufficiently manifested to him, and we may make use of that Notion some had of the death of Moses, viz. when it is written, Deut. 34. 5. That Moses died in the land of Moab according to the word of the Lord. Ps. 72. Or by or upon the mouth of the Lord. That Jehovah kissed Moses when he died, as the Mother takes the sleeping child into bed, her cheek by the Childs cheek in her tender embraces; so may we say of this our Brother Francis, Jehovah kissed him with the kisses of his mouth, at his departure out of this world, having given him a prelibation of glory in his spirit, and he now both Soul and Body recumbeth in the everlasting arms and bosom of Infinite Love.*

2 Cor. 12. 9, &c.

Job 33. 23.
Job 23. 13.
Job 9. 13.

Deut. 34. 5.

Cant. 1. 2.

THOMAS TAYLOR.
JOSEPH HUSSEY.

E P I T A P H

ENtomb his Body, consecrated dust,
Until the Resurrection of the just.
It was a temple full of the Holy Ghost,
In which the Lord did dwell, the
(Lord of Hosts.
Entomb'd with highest greatest state,
(ly Glory;
And get some Fix, some Clerk to write
(his Story
Anoint his Herse with sweet Per-
(fumes of Fame;
Hath any left behind more fragrant
(Name!

When Christ shall come with Troops
(of Cherubims;
And with his Glittering Winged Seraphims,
He'll raise this Temple one of th'
(first you'll see.
And th' second Temple shall more
(Glorious be
Than was the first, in that Christ's
(Person will
Be present with him, and him rich
(ly fill.
WILL. HAWORTH.

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Z E C H I *Chapter 1*
Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes which I commanded my servants, the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned, and said, Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.

Y *OUR fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?*
After the return of this People out of the Babylonish Captivity, (that Pit in which was no Water, in the 8th Chapter) out of which they were brought by the Blood of the Covenant, God raised up two Prophets, Haggai, and this Zechary, to stir them up to Build the Temple of the Lord, and to settle his Worship therein.

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the Province of this Zechary was in God's Name to call the People to return to God. Verse 3. *Turn ye from sin then unto them. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.* A very great Allective and Inducement to return to him, for he will be reconciled. The Favour of God is better than Life. And, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Return;* it is the Call of that God that can arm all in Heaven and Earth against you. One great obstacle to Conversion, is our Imitation of our Fathers. It is very common with Persons to speak of the Dignity of their Progenitors, and yet to imitate them in their Sins. *Be ye not as your Fathers, (Verse 4.) to whom the former prophets cried.* So in the New Testament, Hebr. 3. 7. *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as your fathers did in the day of temptation, altho they saw my works, (so we should read it.) Altho they saw his works, yet they provoked him.* *Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings; but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord.*

The Words, the 5th and 6th Verse, some apprehend are brought in by way of Exhortation. God speaking by the Prophet to the People. *Where are your fathers?* They are not; their Carcasses fell in the Wilderness, and they died under the Displeasure of God in the Captivity. In the second Verse, *The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers.* Where

Where are your fathers? Hath not Moses said in another Case, You are risen up in your Fathers stead, a Generation worse than them. They do as it were retort it upon God, And where are the Prophets, do they live for ever? Our Fathers indeed are dead, but yet God doth not keep his Prophets alive. But saith God, Tho they dye, my Word lives, and shall have its effect, and certain accomplishment.

There are two or three things in the Words.

I. A Concession, that God's Prophets do not live for ever. *The Prophets, do they live for ever?* They are mortal Men, corruptible. So that in this case, I may say, as in Hebr. 7. 23. *They truly (the priests) were many, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death.* They were prohibited to go on in the discharge of their Office; Death superseded them. So the Prophets of God, they were not suffered to continue by reason of Death. *Aaron* was a great Man, employed of God in the Priesthood; but (*Numb. 20. 25, 26.*) saith God to *Moses*, *Let Aaron go up to mount Hor, and there let him dye.* A while after, the same Fate took hold on *Moses*, Deut. 32. 49. *Get thee up into this mount, — and dye in the mount whither thou goest up, — as Aaron thy Brother died in Mount Hor.* Yet this *Moses*, it is said of him, Chap. 34. 10. *There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.* If you would out-do him, turn your Eye upon Christ. There arose not a Prophet in Israel like him. And yet both he and his Brother, *Aaron* died under some displeasure of God, Deut. 32. 51. *Because ye transgressed against me at the waters of Meribah; — because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.*

Did he dye?
No, he lived
in glory.

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The Prophets, do they live for ever? 'Tis well that they die their fair Death. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets! how oft would I have gathered your children; and ye would not. — Some wrest this Scripture for the maintenance of *Arminianism*; but if you observe it, the Text is a plain Text, *How oft would I have gathered your children, and you would not*; you Jerusalem, you great Men. I believe it hath been some complaint of Jesus Christ against this Land. And sometimes the Difficulties that attend the Service of God's Prophets make them covet Death, *1 Kings 19*. When *Jezebel* sware by her Gods, that she would have the Life of *Elijah*, he said, *Lord, let me die*. He was a Man of like Passions with us, and we with him.

II. Tho the Prophets die, and do not live for ever, yet the Word of God does not die; the Word of God lives and abides for ever. *But my word and my statutes, which I commanded my servants, did they not take hold of your fathers?* The Prophets die, but my Word lives, saith God, and hath strength, and can apprehend you, and slay you; thou hast slain them with the Word of thy Mouth. The Apostle saith, *The word of the Lord is not bound*; the Ministers of it are bound; but the Word of the Lord is not bound. The Prophets die, but the Word of the Lord retains it strength and force. *Did not*

The Hebrew, *my words take hold on your Fathers?* Hebrew, *וְדִבְרֵי יְהוָה לָקְחוּ בְּאָזְנוֹתְכֶם*

attigit, apprehendit. Is to overtake, and catch, as

Huntmen the Prey, or one Enemy another in flight.

heels,

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hels, and lays hold on you. If you do not lay hold on God's strength, and make Peace with him; there will be a hand stretcht out to apprehend you, *Psal. 40. 12* where the word is.

Did not my words take hold on your Fathers? The Prophet dies, 1 King. 13: There came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel; and cried against the Altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O Altar, Altar, thus saith the Lord, Behold a child shall be born unto the House of David, Jotham by name, and upon thee shall he offer the Priests of the high places, &c. Notwithstanding this Prophet was killed before he got home, the word of God lived and took place, and took hold on him, 2 King. 23. 17. Saith Jotham, Jotham by name, (God can name a man 300 years before he raiseth him up) saith he, What Title is this that I see? And the men of the City told him, It is the Sepulchre of the Man of God which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things which thou hast done against the Altar of Bethel. The Word of God lives, and hath an Infallible accomplishment.

III. The Lord doth extort an acknowledgment of this; (*Though the Prophets die, yet my words live and are quick and powerful, they take hold on men.*) An Acknowledgment of it: *And they returned and said, Like as the Lord of Hosts thought to do unto us according to our ways, and according to our doings; so hath he dealt with us. God will magnifie his Word, and assert the honour and reputation of his Prophets.*

Now that that I would teach you, is, Though the *Obferu.*
 Proprietors of God die, though the Ministers of Chrift
 do not live for ever, yet the Word of God difpenfed
 by them lives, and will have its certain infallible ac-
 complifh-

complishment, upon Nations, Churches and Persons.

Those that God calls to, and makes use of in the Ministry about Holy things, they differ in their Gifts, in their Graces, in their Judgments, sometimes in their service and usefulness in the Church of God; but they all agree here, they die as others do. *Ye build the Tombs of the Prophets:* (The Prophets have their Tombs, and Righteous men their Sepulchres) saith Christ; *Ye build and garnish them;* (and there is a Generation of men that love God's Prophets best when they are dead) *and ye are the children of them which killed the Prophets;* that is, ye imitate them, *Yea. 11. 19. They devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the Tree with the Fruit thereof.* It is in the Margent, *Let us destroy the Staff with the bread.* The Prophets, the Ministers of God bring the Bread of Life to you. *Let us destroy the Staff with the bread.* (Hebr. *Pano*) (*Perdamus culmum cum grano ejus*, as *Junius* renders it.) We render it, *Let us destroy the Tree with the Fruit.* The meaning is this, Let us kill the Prophet, and there's an end of his Prophecy. But they were mistaken; when they had done that, God will make his Word to take place.

There are two things I would open to you:

1. That the Prophets of God do not live for ever; we are all sensible of it. The Lord teacheth us it this day; *The Prophets do not live for ever.* But,

(2.) Though they do not live, yet the Word of God lives, and will have its effect upon men for good or for evil.

1. The

(1.) *The Prophets do they live for ever?* Consider two or three things.

1. The Prophets of God are subject to the same Law that others are. There is a Statute-Law that is not reversed, and there are so few I think is never transgressed. — There have been some few exceptions; but it will not be repealed till Christ hath swallowed up Death in Victory. The Prophets of God and Righteous men are obnoxious to it as well as others. *Heb. 9. 27. And as it is appointed to men once to die, and after this the judgment.* It is appointed, *Gr. conuenit, it is decreed.* It is decreed to all, it is enacted, and the Prophets have no exemption. Yea, that Man Christ Jesus the Mediator and great High Priest, He was under this Law: He was made under the Law: He was to die: And by one offering for ever perfected them that are dedicated to God. *It was appointed to all men once to die; and to die penally, by the force of that threatening.* *Gen. 22. 18. In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* Christ died Penally, He was made a curse; and his dying so, hath delivered some, that they shall not die Penally. But to die Naturally, that continues to all; to the Prophets, and them that fear him, as well as others. *Rom. 8. 10. If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* If Christ be in you, though there be that happy union, yet he lets the Body be arrested by Death, the Body is dead. Believers Bodies, the Bodies of his Ministers, of his Prophets are dead; that is, Obnoxious to Death. I think it hath reference to the second verse: *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* How from the law of sin, he had shewed before; here he comes to shew

shew how from the law of Death. The Body is dead, and that is by sin. Sin brought in death. Adam had not died if he had not sinned; and there being the reliques of sin, Sin that dwells in Believers themselves, the viciousity and corruption of nature, something of sin found in them, they must die; there's no help, we must die. The spirit (I think 'tis the soul) is life, and capable of living with God in a separate state, and shall be in the fruition of God; and the Body shall at length be joyned with it. And as a pledge of it this is added, *The spirit is life because of righteousness.* What God doth in sanctifying of his own here, is a pledge to them that their whole man shall live with him hereafter.

2. *The Prophets, do they live for ever?* They are Stewards, Ambassadors, Labourers; and so Christ will not have them live for ever.

They shall have their Reward. They shall come and tell what is the issue of their performing their Embassy in the world; What reception they had; How they were used.

1 Cor. 4.1,2. 1. *We are Stewards of the Mystery and manifold Grace of God;* and Wisdom and Faithfulness are required in a Steward. A Steward should be Wise and Faithful; the Lord make us so, who have a Stewardship from him. We must give an account of our Stewardship, and you to whom we give a portion of meat in due season, should take some care that we give up our accounts with joy, and not with grief. Christ will call his Stewards to account; they must tell what they have done with their Talents, how they have improved and gained.

2. They

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ch 21. They are Ambassadors also; they have the word of Reconciliation committed to them; they have it in them; and they treat with you about the highest concerns. *We pray you be ye reconciled to God.* We pray you in Christ's stead; if he had not other work to do in Heaven, he would come and Preach to you himself; but we do it in his stead. Now is it not your advantage to be friends with God? But we must go back and give an account what reception we have had in the world. Ambassadors will be called home, they will not always lye Lieger here below.

1 Cor. 5. 19.
ἀποστολὴ ἐν
ᾧ, placed,
or deposited
in us.

3. I might shew you this also for Labourers; the day declines; and a man that hath wrought hard all the heat of the day, is willing to go to rest. A servant earnestly desireth the shadow, Job 7. 2. *And the sleep of the labouring man is sweet to him.*

1 Cor. 3. 9.
οἱ κτρίσται.
Co-workers.
God makes
use of their
labour.

3. The Prophets do they live for ever? Jesus Christ hath Rewards for them, small and great, Rev. 11. *The time is come---that thou shouldest give reward to thy servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great, &c.* which is sometimes the only relief and support we have, when we cry out, *We have laboured in vain; and spent our strength for nought:* The radical moisture is dried up; the Bellows are burnt; we have no lungs to speak more to you. Well, Christ hath rewards for his Prophets and Servants in Heaven, *Great is your reward in Heaven.* There's no getting to Heaven without dying. It may be you would be willing to be fetched in Chariots of fire, but that is not every man's lot. We have our work to do. Jesus Christ

Is. 49 4.
radicalem
humidum
radicale.

was his Father's servant; an extraordinary one, to do extraordinary work; he finished it, and glorified God on earth, and then God glorified him with himself. Thus it is with Christ's servants; they have their work to do, they are to finish it, and to glorify God here below, and then God gathers them up, and rewards them; they have their reward; their works follow them. *They die in the Lord, and cease from their labour, and their works follow them. (Rev. 14.)* in the Reward of them.

4. *The Prophets die;* and God will thereby chastise an ungrateful world, and punish the barrenness of them that have enjoyed their Ministry. You had need fear and tremble before him, lest he do so by you. When the Vineyard is barren, God will either take away the hedge, and sling it up to be a prey to the beasts of the wood; else he will take away the dresser; he shall no more dig and prune it, no more labour shall be spent upon it, no more cost and pains shall be taken with it. Saith God, the rain came oft upon it, and it brought forth briars and thorns; such are nigh unto cursing, and their end is to be burnt.

The Prophets live not for ever. God will teach you by it, that your season will not always last. Know your time, as Christ said, *Joh. 12. 35. Yet a little while is the light with you: Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; For he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. (The next step may be Hell.) While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.*

But

But I will go off that, and give a little account of the second, and so come to the Use.

(2.) *Though the Prophet live not for ever, yet the Word of God lives.* Do but consider a little:

1. The Prophets of God use to come with their Menaces, the threatening part of God's Word; and though the threatening you think is always Conditional, and leaves space for Repentance; (this made the Prophet *Jonah* refuse to go on his Errand: I knew, saith he, that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and thou wilt repent thee of the evil; and so I should have my Reputation stained: Go and preach to *Ninivch*, and say, Yet forty days, and *Ninivch* shall be destroyed; and then God repent: They will say, There's a lying Prophet.) Yet let me tell you, when God denounceth his judgments, sometimes he puts his Oath to the Threatning, swears to the matter, and then it is irrevocable. As I live, saith the Lord, my heart cannot be towards this people.

And as the Ministry of the Prophets had a Minatory part, so truly the Gospel hath Threatnings, most severe ones. *Mark 16. 16.* He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned. Words that came out of the gracious mouth of the Son of God. *Heb. 10. 26.* If we sin willfully, shall we escape? if we neglect so great salvation, there's no escaping Damnation. The Word of God lives. The very Threatning lives. Though the Prophets die, God will take care to make good his threatening, be sure he will do it, when

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he swears in wrath we shall never enter into his rest.

2. The Word of God abides too, as it comprizeth the Promises, which are a declaration of God's Grace and good will towards men. This was part of the Prophets Office, to publish the Promise, *Luk. 1. 69. He hath raised up an Horn of Salvation for us, as he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets since the world began, to perform the mercy promised to our Fathers, &c.* So the Apostle Peter, saith he, *The spirit of God spake by the Prophets concerning Christ, his sufferings, and the Glory that should follow.* So the Ministers of the New Testament, O how they love to Preach the New Covenant, and all the Promises for the relief of distressed sinners! It is the most pleasing part of their work, *2 Cor. 1. 20. For all the Promises of God in him (in Christ) are yea, and in him Amen, to the Glory of God by us.* God glorifies himself by us; God glorifies his faithfulness in performing his Promises by our Ministry. The Promise lives; for God lives whose the Promise is: He cannot lye, nor cannot change. He shews by it the Immutability of his Counsel, that the heirs of Salvation may have strong consolation.

God's Prophets and Ministers they die; but the Word dispensed by them, that lives; it hath its fulfillment. Our work is to declare the whole counsel of God to you that concern your Salvation; and God doth cause his Prophets to stand in his Covenant, and the secrets of God are with them. Saith the Apostle, *Acts 20. I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God, and have kept back nothing that was profitable for you.*

Prea-

Preaching Repentance towards God, and Faith towards the Lord Jesus. — His Counsel shall stand. You shall see my face no more, saith he to them, verse 38. But this whole Counsel of God, which I have declared, shall be fulfilled; and there is no Person, no Churches that do reject the Counsel of God, but it is against themselves, i. e. to their own ruin, *Luke 7. 30.*

The Word of God lives; the Prophets dye, but the Word of God lives. The Word of God dispensed by us, is as seed sown, though it seem to dye under the Clods, yet it will live again; the Lord gives it a Body, or rather a Spirit. And so *1 Peter 1. 23.* — *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.* In all Productions there is some Seed out of which the Creature is brought forth, so it is in the new Creature. — *Born of the incorruptible seed, the word which we Preach to you;* and this Word lives and abides for ever; and if it be turned into a vital Principle in your Souls, that will abide too; it will be the Seed of God that remains. And though in our sowing we go forth with precious Seed, we wish it might alike prosper; but we do not always meet with good Ground; that which falls into good Ground, by the blessing of God brings forth Fruit, some more, and some less. The Word of God lives, the Prophets dye, the Ministers of Christ dye; but their Word lives and will take place.

Now I would make some Application.

The Prophets, do they live for ever? No; they do not live for ever; they are Mortal and Frail; they

they dye sooner than other Men; their Labour is great, and that they do not live for ever, I would have you make these two or three Uses of it.

1. Think with your selves, God's Prophets and Ministers dye. It becomes us to have our hearts affected with it, to put our hearts to this matter, *Isaiah 57: 1. The righteous perish, and no man lays it to heart. The Lord will take notice how you are affected this day for this Prophet. The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the soil to come; he shall enter into peace. Blessed be God for that Admission into Peace, God hath given his Servant. He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds; (— the Grave is a cold Bed; but really ever since Christ lodged in it, it is so perfumed, that we need not be afraid to lie down and sleep) each one walking in his uprightness. But, saith he, The righteous perish, (it is Dying, Lord we perish, saith the Disciples) and no man lays it to heart. It is the Complaint of God, that we are not duly affected when he causeth a righteous Man to perish. Now, the dying of a Prophet is more than the perishing of a righteous Man. He that gives to a Righteous Man a Cup of Water in the Name of a Righteous Man, shall have a Righteous Mans reward. And he that receiveth a Prophet in the Name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward. Shall a Prophet dye, and shall not we put our heart to it? Or to think such a one is removed, who use to give us such Instruction,*

תנן to per-
ish here, is to
dye; he is ta-
ken away,
תנן In a
man college.
He is gathered
to his Fathers,
and no Man,
כך נעו
Ponens super
Cor. 1. qui
caret Schindler.

tion, such Reproof, such Consolation; to give Milk to Babes, and strong Meat to Men; that had the Tongue of the Learned to speak a word in Season to them that are weary, but now we shall hear him no more; nothing will drop from his Lips any more. He is gone into his Bed, and as to any use he can be of, is perished. *Let us lay our hearts*

2. If the Prophets dye, and do not live, you that have enjoyed their Ministry, Oh! how highly doth it concern you to follow their Faith, observing the end of their Conversation, Hebr. 13. 7. Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. He speaks of them that had been guides to them, and had spoken the word of God, but they were dead and gone, the Lord had removed them, and gathered them up to himself; they have spoken to you the Word of God. Now, saith he, whose Faith follow. That glorious Gospel of the Blessed God that they preached to you, that Faith follow, and imitate it, that your hearts may be established in the true Grace of the Gospel. And remember, bear in mind, how they used to live by Faith, and vigorously to act it upon the Son of God; do you imitate it, follow the steps of their Faith; observing the end of their Conversation (Gr. τὴν ἐκ-
εὐαγγ. & ἀναστροφὴν.) The end of their Conversation; what God hath brought them to; what issue and period God hath put to them and their days, observing the end of their Conversation. 1 Cor. 10. 13. God makes a way of escape out of temptation. God deli-

Exhauit, Signifies an end accompanied with deliverance from, and Conquest over Difficulties and Dan-

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vers them from all their Sins and Sufferings; wipes all Tears from their Eyes; makes a good End with them. Mark the perfect Man, and observe the Upright, the end of that Man is Peace. This is your Duty.

And there is one thing more, and that is, When the Prophets dye, do you take care that when the Prophets of God are admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven, that you be not shut out. It will be a very great Aggravation, it will aggrandize your Misery to enjoy such Prophecy, such Preaching, and then the Prophets dye, and go to Heaven; when you come to dye, to go to another place, Luke 13. 28. *There shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of heaven, and you your selves thrust out.* O think with your selves, what will be the anguish of those that perish from under such a Ministry! What, shall I perish now from under such a Ministry! That's one Use: *Have a care you be not thrust out.* The Prophets come and Preach the Kingdom of God to you; and having the Key of Knowledge, they open the Door. *Come, say they, enter the kingdom, take it by violence.* And it may be many will neither go in themselves, nor suffer others to enter in. When the prophets go to heaven, have a care lest you should be shut out.

Use (2.) Tho the Prophets dye, yet the Word of God lives. Remember that, God will make you to remember it. And your Business is to enquire, what hath been the quickning and enlivening Verture and Power

Power of the word upon your Souls. We Preach the Gospel, and we are not ashamed of it, for it is the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believes. Hath it been productive of such a thing as Faith in your Souls, that purifies the heart, apprehends Christ, and all that is in Christ? Hath the word come with Life and Power to you, and caused Life in your Souls? 1 Theff. 1. 5. *Our Gospel, saith he, came not in word only, but in power, &c.* Pray inquire into that.

And if the word of God lives, tho the Minister dye, then really it will be of some effect or other to you all; either a *savour of life unto life, or of death* ^{2 Cor. 2. 14,} *unto death.* Thanks be to God, that makes us to tri- ^{15, 16.}umph. — The Gospel will be of some use when we are gone; either a *savour of life unto life, or of death unto death.*

Nay, let me say this, Because the Word lives, tho the Prophets dye, the Word of God will follow you to Judgment, and there will meet you when you come up from the dead, and it may be God's Prophets will be a Cloud of Witnesses against you. John 12. 48. *He that rejecteth me, and receives not my words, there's one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* The word lives till you come to Judgment, and then will decide your Condition. Christ will do it according to the word.

Use (3.) One thing more. [*The Prophets dye.*] I will speak one thing for your Comfort, and that is, Christ lives; Ministers dye, but Christ lives.

A Funeral Sermon.

He was once dead, but he is alive, and lives for evermore. And he lives, as the great Prophet raised up by God. As one said of the Prophets, Who is their Father? He that is the Father of Eternity. (Isaiah 9.) He is alive. Hebr. 7. 23. They were not suffered to continue by reason of death. But this Man, because he hath an unchangeable Priesthood, lives for ever. He hath an Office that doth not pass from him to another. The Prophets dye. Ministers dye; that that is the Spring of Consolation, is, Christ lives. He lives to reward your Faith and Perseverance. You that have believed upon hearing the word of Truth, the Gospel of Salvation, he lives to reward that Faith, and your persevering in that Faith. Come! hold on in Faith, in Holiness, in the Order and Fellowship of the Gospel, (that which this Servant of Christ so much desired in his going off.) Christ lives to reward your Constancy, *Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls,* 1 Peter 1. 9.

And then, that he lives too, it is to give us more Prophets, to raise up more Prophets for us, and to make some able Ministers of the *New Testament*. And truly they are only of Christ's making. We have no sufficiency of our selves for this Work. He gives Pastors and Teachers for the Work of the Ministry. He is ascended for it. And I would, all that meddle with that Work, were of his giving. Amos 2. 11. *I raised up of your sons for Prophets.* (I raised them up.) He is alive. He can raise up Prophets for you; he can raise up your Sons to be Prophets.

I have

I have now but a little more to say. As for our
Honoured and Beloved Brother fallen asleep in Je-
sus. A great man is fallen in our *Israel*; a Prophet;
yea more than a Prophet; an able Minister of the
New Testament. Consider him as to his knowledge in
the Mystery of Christ, and so was rich and great.
God had so divinely irradiated his Mind and Heart,
by giving him the knowledge of his Glory in the
Face of Christ, that he was well able to Preach the
unsearchable Riches of Christ to the *Gentiles*; and
to make all Men see what is the Fellowship of this
Mystery. You that knew him, understood his know-
ledge in that Mystery. As to his way of Preaching,
though it seemed less methodical, yet truly when
I have sometimes considered it, it hath appeared to
me (at least) Apostolical, Primitive, and Divine. He
knew *that which he spake*, and spake *as he knew*. His
words were *as it were* *the words of God*. His
words being mostly those of the Holy Ghost,
they had a quick and penetrating Power and Ef-
ficacy with them. So that in his Ministry, he
was wont to commend himself to the conscience of
every one before God. His Bow abode in strength,
and his Hands were made strong by the Hands of
the Mighty God of Jacob. His Arrows sharp in the
hearts of the Kings Enemies; whereby the People fell
under Christ, your guiltless. As to the discharge of his Ministry, he was much
in Labours, and Indefatigable. If it might not be
an Offence, I think I might almost say, He labour-
ed more than us all. He was, *as it were*, *the*
servant of the church, and therefore hath Ho-
nour, double honour, and that from above. He did
labour much, and in many things,

2 Cor. 4. 6.
Eis to au-
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2 Cor. 4. 2.

Phil. 3. 20.

and not in vain. He did not labour in vain, nor spend his strength for nought, for he had great success. Christ had chosen him to be a Vessel to bear his Name; and he brought forth Fruit that remained, which shall be his Joy and Crown of rejoicing in the day of Christ. In the House of God he knew how to behave himself; and was faithful to him that appointed him; and therefore had Honour. And though sometimes he might seem to have too much of the Spirit and Power of *Elias* with him, yet it was tempered with the Sweetness and gentleness of the Gospel. His Affection to the House of God, was such, that the Zeal of it eat him up: And there was no greater rejoicing to him, than to see Persons walk according to the Constitution, Frame, and Order of Christ in the *New Testament*. Nothing more afflicting, than to see any turn aside to crooked Paths. As for his Conversation, it was holy, it was heavenly. His *Abode*, his Citizenship was in Heaven, from whence he looked for a Saviour. So that the Character that is proper to a Bishop of the *New Testament*, was found with him. *1 Tim. 3.* He was blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach. His Conversation was a continual teaching. Pray! do you observe the end of it? And as for his Sufferings, they did nothing move him, *εὐχάριστος αἰσιν παντοῦ*, saith the Apostle, *Act. 16. 24.* I make not a word of these things. Bonds and afflictions abide me in every place; but none of these things move me. I do not make a word of them. He was set for the Apology and Defence of the Gospel. And as in the Course of his Ministry (I speak as one intimately acquainted with him) as in the Course of

of his Ministry he had the Spirit of Power, Love, and a sound Mind; so in his Afflictions and Persecutions the Spirit of God and Glory did rest upon him. To sum up all, You that were inwardly acquainted with him, you fully knew his Doctrine, *1 Tim. 3. 10, 11. You have fully known his Doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecution, afflictions: But out of them all the Lord hath delivered him.*

But you will say, What was the reason of God's dark and severe dispensation towards him in his latter days? Truly I am not in God's stead to give you an account of his matters; the Lord doth save men upon the point of Sovereign Grace, and God doth exercise the same dominion in his Providence; and sometimes will laugh at the very trial of the Innocent. His ways and judgments even towards his own are unsearchable and past finding out. Let us sanctifie the Lord God of Hosts in our hearts, and fear before him. *Phil. 3. 10. That I may know the fellowship of his sufferings.* The Apostle discerned that the sufferings of Christ were attended with desertion and darkness. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And for a time that Man so dear to his Father, being his Eternal Son, yet he had lost that joy and delectation which the fruition of God, and the fulness of Grace was wont to afford him. It may be thus with his Ministers, and if it be, they have but a fellowship with him in his sufferings. But now blessed be God that the Sun brake out of the Cloud: God did not let him die in the dark, but brought his soul to peace and rest; and to a rejoycing in God's Eternal love to him. The Sun of Righteousness did arise before he gave up the Ghost.

The

A Funeral Sermon.

The Sun of Righteousness did arise upon him with healing under his wings: that gave him an abundant entrance into the Heavenly Kingdom. Christ hath shewed all his dealings with him for several years, (not all springing from a Divine hand, but natural causes as *Hypochondria*, &c.) yet he hath shewed that they were such as were consistent with the Eternal Love of God, to make him partaker of his Holiness; and Christ having loved him as his own, and loved him to the end, (to Perfection) has loved him into Glory. There we leave him, till the Blessed Glorious Resurrection.

VERSES upon the Death of the
Reverend Brother Mr. FRANCIS
HOLCROFT, Pastor of the Church
in *Cambridgeshire*; Who Died at
Triplow in *Cambridgeshire*, on Janu-
ary, 1691.

HE none of the Minor Prophets was, he's dead:
This Age saw not a better hearted head,
Prophet die must, his Preaching that takes hold Zech. 1. 5.
Of thousand hearts; the fruit's a hundred fold:
Round all the Coasts of *Cambridge* where ye come,
You'll hear of's Trophies to *Illyrium*. Rom. 15. 19.
Satan in's seat sang with his Annick Chöre,
To see the Funerals of the Conqueror. Rev. 2. 13.
Yet *Cambridge* know, as he said in his days,
God will deal with you according to your ways. Zech. 1. 6.
E'er lives this Prophet, Immortal spirit,
(If ever any) I would say there's merit,
So richly holy, and Angelick Saint,
Babies and Dwarfs we're all to this Giant.
Alas a Prince, a King, great General,
Highly Anointed's fallen in *Israel*.
He wore out's body in these holy Wars,
'Twas bruised, wounded, full of mortal fears;

O blessed Soldier ! hardship did endure,
 Behov'd thy Brethren all, not *Sine Cure*,
 And wholly spent thou was, and still did spend,
 Until thy Humour-radical did end.
 We saw's dead Body perfect Skelliton,
 Like that which's tackt up by Chyrurgeon.
 His house of Clay did crumble into mould,
 His Heav'n-born soul no longer dwell in't could:
 A Glorious House made without hands on high,
 Possess'd he's of unto eternify.
 In this like *Moses* had Mount *Pissah's* Ken,
 A clear and perfect Landskip of *Canaan*:
 Unlike to *Moses*, he soon went to it,
 When as to *Moses* the Lord would only show it.
 What *Rabbies* said of *Moses's* verifi'd,
 God kiss'd *Francis Holcroft*, and he di'd.
 As Mother th' Child dandles upon her lap,
 Her Cheek by'ts Cheek until it takes a nap.
 He's but a sleep, with morning you'll him see,
 I'th Church of th' first born where he lov'd to be.
 O for such Preachers, Lord, send thou an host,
 Trebly anointed with the Holy Ghost:
 That Satan lightning he from Heaven be cast,
 That *Cambridge* Candlestick in glory last:
 With Golden Oyl through Golden Pipes suppli'd,
 With two anointed ones o'th' left right side,
 From the Olive-tree the most Anointed one,
 And let the Man the Branch build Temple on:
 And let him bear the Glory, worthy he,
 God's spotless Lamb slain for Iniquity.
 Father why did thy noble Child of Light
 In darkness walk ? why cry'd so in the night,
 So long, so oft ? why stoodst behind the wall ?
 Thou knewest he would importunately call,

And

2 Cor. 5. 1.
 His Dying
 words.

Deut. 34. 1, 2,
 3, 4.

Deut. 34. 5.

Heb. 12. 23.

Phil. 2. 20.

2 Cor. 3. 7.

Luk. 10. 18.

Zech. 4. 11, 12.

Zech. 6. 12.

Isa. 50. 10.

Cant. 2. 9.

And give no rest, but cry Father, *Abba*. *Abba* didst thou
 More instantly did never any pray.
 How was his Note chang'd! he had midnight Song,
 A *Phylomela*, tho' pricking Thorns among.
 Jayl-birds, with *Silas*, in *Cambridge* Castle sings:
 But in God's Prison his Lark-like warblings
 Do cease, O *Yehovah*! righteous Sovereign
 To all thy Matters answers not again.
 Why *Job*, why *Jeremiah*, curse their Birth-day shine? *Job* 31. 13.
 Highest Reason's Sovereign Will Divine.
 O deepest Depths of wisest Providence
Jonah i'th *Whales* Belly, and prays from thence, *Jonah* 2. 1.
 And was preserv'd, cast alive o'th' Shore:
 O blest be Christ, O blest for evermore.
 O blest Martyr, beautiful to see;
 Conform'd to'th' Pattern in thy Agony
 Before thy Death, in strong Cries and in Tears;
 And thou was heard in thy believing Fears.
 Cease now, O Lord, a while, let lone the rest,
 We are sure, of Ministers, thou hast the best. *Heb.* 5. 7.

Some Verses made upon the Death of the
 Eminent and Reverend Servant of Christ
 in the Ministry of the Gospel, Mr. Fran-
 cis Holcraft.

As the Chariots and the Horsemen's gone,
 How can the War be longer carried on
 'Gainst Antichrist? Jesus! let's Mantle fall,
 Of Power, of Zeal, of Gifts, of Graces, all

woH

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Which

Which clothed him upon the Infantry: on evig. lnd
 O let *Paul's* Spirit rest on *Timothy*.
 We saw him long ascending far above;
 His Brethren thought still that he would remove
 Out of our sight to Heaven, there to view
Jernsalem, Celestial City new,
 Where he was free born; when he Preaches next,
 How sweetly will he Comment on that Text!
Holcraft and *Oddy*, they neither could
 The Evangelick Mysteries unfold,
 Until comment'd; they had took a Degree
 In the Celestial University:
 Both Learning, Piety, had been withstood,
 But for a *Commendamus* in Christ's Blood.
 Lord stay thine hand, and let alone the rest;
 Thou hast him now, I'm sure, which lov'd thee best.
Luther ne're di'd till now; glorious free Grace
 Engraven was in's heart, in's head, in's face;
 In broader, fairer, deeper Characters than can
 Be found in any preaching, praying Man.
 Pope sings *Te Deum*, *Oxford* and *Cambridge* Friends,
 Blind *Quakers* Gifts unto each other send.
Atheists make merry. *Arminians* Wills are free,
Holcraft no Tomb should have, but Calumny.
 Darknefs that can be felt, who can but fear,
 While such a Sparkling Star doth disappear,
 As *Holcraft* was, dazzling the envious Eye
 Of spurious Christian, Grace's enemy.
 Did we not know't of Rising Sun, a sign
 When all the Stars i'th' Sky no longer shine.
 O gracious Saint, how did thy Count'nance shine?
 B:hold Mount *Sinai's* Preachers; great Divine.
 Thy Feet were beautiful, I could have kiss'd
 The Soles thereof, O Sweet Evangelist!

How

How Glorious is that Sun of Righteousness,
Whose Rays reflected, makes a Saint no less
Than an Illustrious, Conquering, Princely King?
Such *Holcroft* was; *Israel* in wrastling;
Who ever did the Spirit of Faith more bold
In Prayer with God, than in this Man behold?
Such Liberty, such Life, such Light he had;
Weak ones offended, wicked says he's mad.
Lament you Ministers of Christ; he was
For Doctrine, *Paul*; for Comfort, *Barnabas*;
He was *Apollas*, so mighty in the Word;
He was a *John* for Love unto his Lord;
A *Timothy*, he naturally did care
For Truth, while others minded their Affair.
Boanerges in the Law, by dreadful Thunder,
Struck down his hearers, rent their hearts asunder.
He was a *Moses*, in the Mount did stay,
I never heard one at that rate to pray.
Some single Gifts in others may have been,
But Constellations were in *Holcroft* seen:
Perfections take from one, then from another,
They all did Center in this blessed Brother.
With what great Scripture plainness did he Preach?
With what Majestick boldness did he Teach?
He Giant-like came forth to run his Race,
Being firmly girt with Apostolick Grace.
He was made of God, a fenced Brazen Wall,
Strong to recieve the Gun-shot great and small.
His Doctrines Christ, his Natures, Offices,
Faith in his Blood, and then right Holiness.
Cambridge, Christ lent him for a time to thee,
A Pattern for thy Preachers he should be.
Look on this Copy fairly writ, -and mend
Your hands, then Christ your Lord will you commend.

O quit

O quit your selves like Men; be cloath'd with Zeal;
 Concern your selves with *Israel's* Commonweal.
 Be strong in power; in Love, in Gospel-word,
 Cut every Man with that two-edged Sword.
 Be bold as Lyons, like this Man of God;
 Dash them in pieces with that powerful Rod.
 O! let his People know that joyful sound,
 And in their heart and lives let it abound;
 Which like to *Aaron's* Bells, did's feet surround
 In every place where he did tread the ground;
 This noise of Peace did to the Saints redound,
Holcroft of Preachers, for Faith, for Zeal the best;
 I'll only say, he's Dead, and weep the rest.

F I N I S.